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papers and magazines drawn upon, would have enhanced the value of this study.

To one acquainted with the Scandinavian tongues the accuracy manifested in the handling of Norwegian names and terms is gratifying. I have noted only one serious error of statement: the Laurvik-Morrison translation of Ibsen's letters owes its entire critical apparatus (without acknowledgement) to the joint editors of the *Breve fra Henrik Ibsen*, Halvdan Koht and Julius Elias.

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*BRITISH CRITICISMS OF AMERICAN WRITINGS, 1783-1815. A CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY OF ANGLO-AMERICAN LITERARY RELATIONSHIPS.* By William B. Cairns, Madison, 1918, pp. 98, (University of Wisconsin Studies in Language and Literature, Number 1).

What Professor Cairns has attempted to do in the present volume is to show "how English and Scottish readers viewed American writings" during the first three decades of our national independence, and further, to "ascertain what British criticisms of American work were so published as to exert an immediate influence in America." To this end he first briefly discusses the literary conditions prevailing in America and in England during the period covered; then passes to a consideration of the attitude of individual British writers, of the British magazines, and of the British public in general toward American books and American literary and intellectual development; after which he summarizes and comments on the more significant critical notices of American books and authors by British writers of the day, taking up first the notices of non-literary writings, then the works of Franklin and Paine (who receive a separate chapter by reason of their prominence in the eyes of British critics of the day), and finally of individual writers of poetry, fiction, and essays.

Among the most informing and most entertaining chapters are those devoted to the attitude of the British poets of the time and to the attitude of the periodical press. The British poets, though interested one and all in America, wrote but little about contemporary American literature, recognizing its comparative insignificance as pure literature; the professional reviewers, on the other hand, devoted a good deal of attention to American publications, especially those of a political and theological, and scientific nature. Important also is the discussion of the vogue of Franklin and Paine. But perhaps the most valuable chapter in the book is that in which Professor Cairns

sums up the contemporary comments on the early American poets and novelists and essayists. Freneau he shows to have been virtually ignored in England (owing in part, as he suggests, to the fact that his works were not generally accessible as yet); Dwight and Trumbull also received scant notice; while Joel Barlow and certain lesser verse-writers, including the forgotten William Moore Smith and Mrs. Sarah Wentworth Morton, came in for a good deal of attention. Brown, like Freneau, received but little attention, although his novels were reprinted in England and were later to become fairly well known there.

The conclusions that Professor Cairns reaches are that "British interest in American thought and American writings was considerable" for the period covered, and that it arose not merely from curiosity, but proceeded from a "serious concern with the political, economic, and . . . scientific and religious development of the new nation." British writers, moreover, contrary to the belief of many Americans of the time, were, he declares, inclined to be fair in their judgments on American books and American ideas, though they sometimes adopted "a paternal, if not a patronizing manner." The influence of foreign criticism, much of which was reprinted in American journals, he believes to have been fairly substantial.

Throughout the volume Professor Cairns exhibits the same painstaking concern for accuracy and thoroughness and the same modesty that distinguished his earlier studies in American literary history.

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